

STELLA WRIGHT HOMES HOPE VI

"TRANSFORMING TODAY'S VISION INTO TOMORROW'S REALITY"

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Transforming Today's Vision Into Tomorrow's Reality

In this issue we've challenged each former Stella Wright Homes resident to "GET INVOLVED." Turn to the Assistant Executive Director's column on page 2 and learn how you can join the process by signing on for a committee. On page 4 you are challenged to activate the process that will lead you and your family to self-sufficiency. Finally, on page 7 is a recount of the activism residents demonstrated during the lengthy rent strike that resulted in Tenant Management and a change in national funding policies relative to family high-rise public housing development. The Stella Wright Homes Revitalization Project is an opportunity for each of you to write your names in the history books of the Central Ward in a powerful and positive fashion. Your creative ideas and energy are essential to ensure that the new neighborhoods being built at Stella Wright, Hill Manor and Hayes Homes reflect your vision of "HOME."

HAROLD LUCAS RETURNS TO NEWARK HOUSING AUTHORITY



Newark Housing Authority welcomes Harold Lucas in his second term as executive director.

they get every possible assistance they need to ensure the success of this project. "I'm also looking forward to sitting down with the former Stella Wright residents to understand their opinions about the program," he added.

The HOPE VI program is an important milestone, Lucas said, because it is "another opportunity to make public housing a part of the community" by integrating the new housing into the community as a viable neighborhood—as opposed to being separate and apart from the community.

The completion of the HOPE VI project "will give us much needed housing," Lucas added.

Lucas is a native of Newark and a graduate of Seton Hall Law School. His experience as a housing expert began while in law school when he served as deputy executive director of the Newark Housing Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Corporation (NHDRC) where he implemented the planning/development and management of over 2,000 units of single, multi-family and senior citizen housing. He joined the NHA as director of redevelopment and senior associate counsel in 1981.

Five years later he was appointed Director of Newark's \$2.5 billion Department of Development where he instituted a "one-stop-shop" approach to development.

Lucas has been cited by *New Jersey Monthly Magazine* as one of Newark's "Renaissance Men." He is also active in leadership roles on area Boards and Commissions.

On July 1, 2002, Harold Lucas became Executive Director of the Newark Housing Authority (NHA) for the second time in his career, having served previously in this position in 1992. Newark Mayor Sharpe James, in making the announcement, heralded Lucas' achievements as Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing at the Department of Housing and Urban Development for nearly three years. "He will be able to use his expertise and contacts in the housing arena to administer the Stella Wright Homes \$35 million HOPE VI grant program that will remake the Central Ward," James said. Most recently, Lucas served as Business Administrator for the City of Newark since 2000.

On a busy afternoon recently, Lucas said he will be working closely with the HOPE VI team to make sure that



COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

This committee will serve as the residents Steering Committee giving overall guidance on the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI project.

HAYES HOMES SITE STELLA WRIGHT SITE HILL MANOR SITE

Each site will have a residents committee to work with the developers on the design of the sites (park and recreational space, parking spaces, streets) and the layout of the units.

SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE:

The residents' social services committee will assist staff, consultants and the Community Supportive Services task force in identifying gaps in services, training, and educational services for the residents.



Each committee will meet quarterly, or as business dictates. Seven to nine residents are needed for each committee, and some committees may also have sub-committees for which we will need volunteers.

FROM THE DESK OF THE ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Now is the time for every former Stella Wright Homes resident to take personal responsibility for his/her use of the services provided by NHA to ensure your self-sufficiency. The buildings are down and the nuts and bolts of the planning process are just getting underway. **Now is the time** to express your needs, wants and dreams as part of a committee working to shape the future of the Stella Wright Homes HOPE VI Revitalization Plan. **Now is the time** to be counted before the mortar is set in the plans, before the roofs start to rise, and before there is nothing more to do except express regret that you never participated. **Now is the time** to discuss with the HOPE VI staff, the developers, and the community service consultant teams your

anxiety about room sizes, about playground spaces, and about viable jobs and training and other support services.

There is a saying that opportunity only knocks once. Well, that's not the case with the Stella Wright HOPE VI Revitalization project. We are going to knock and continue to knock until you respond and join us in this planning process. Some of you have great stories about how Stella used to be when you first moved in. That chapter in history has been written. Now is your chance to be able to brag to your children and grandchildren and neighbors and friends that you were part of the team that planned this wonderful new neighborhood at Hill Manor or Scudder or Stella. You now have the chance to express to social service

consultants how best to develop, organize and present the services you and other former Stella residents need. And you have an opportunity to contribute to the design and planning for all 755 housing units that will soon occupy this 45-acre space—not just the units that renters will occupy or public housing residents will occupy.

The HOPE VI staff challenges you today to join us in this exciting reshaping of Newark's Central Ward. The committee options are listed on the tear-off below. Take a minute to complete it and mail it to us, or pick up the phone and call Doris McCray-Crank to join a committee. **We're waiting for your call!**

Karen Torian

SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE

Name _____

Sign up for:

Best day & time for meeting: _____

Address _____

- ☐ CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
☐ SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
☐ STELLA WRIGHT SITE COMMITTEE
☐ HAYES HOMES SITE COMMITTEE
☐ HILL MANOR SITE COMMITTEE

Phone _____

Clip the above coupon and mail it to:
 Doris McCray-Crank, 57 Sussex Avenue, Newark NJ 07103
 Or call Doris at 973-430-2249 and let her know which committee you will join.



HELPFUL HINTS FROM SHEILA: SECTION 8: WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR APARTMENT NEEDS REPAIRS



Both the tenant and the landlord have certain responsibilities for maintenance of a dwelling unit. In general a tenant must protect and preserve a landlord's property. Generally accepted housekeeping practices usually will insure this. The property should be returned to the landlord in the same condition as it was received, minus normal wear and tear.

Your landlord is generally responsible for keeping the apartment or house and the common areas of the building (hallways, elevators, grounds, etc.) in a habitable, safe and decent condition. In addition, your landlord is generally responsible for making repairs **unless:**

- You have agreed to make certain repairs in the lease, or
- You or a family member have caused the condition that needs repairing.

If repairs are needed in your apartment (for example a sink is not working) or certain conditions need to be fixed such as ridding the apartment of insects, the landlord is responsible for making the repairs and for correcting the condition **unless** the problem was caused by you or one of your family members.

If there is a problem in

your apartment not caused by you, your family members or guest, you should tell the landlord exactly what the problem is immediately. Just talking to the landlord or the superintendent and telling him about the problem is not all that you have to do. It is best to also write your complaint in a letter and to keep a copy for yourself and forward a copy of the letter to your Section 8 manager.

You should put the date on the letter, specifically state the problem, and sign the letter. You can hand deliver the letter to the landlord or mail it to his address. If you decide to mail the letter, it is probably best that you get some proof of mailing and/or send it certified mail. If you are going to hand deliver the letter, you should have a witness present who will, if necessary, be able to testify in court that you gave the letter to your landlord. The witness should have read the

letter before you present it.

If the repair or condition is a non-emergency situation, you should wait a reasonable amount of time for the landlord to make the necessary repairs. "Reasonable amount of time" will vary from situation to situation. For instance, a landlord may be expected to take longer to repair a broken closet door than to repair a broken toilet. If the landlord fails to respond in this timeframe, you should contact your Section 8 worker and report the problem and the steps you have taken.

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

An emergency repair is a situation that is threatening the health and safety of your family—lack of heat, hot water, non-working bathroom—for which the landlord is responsible under the terms of the lease. Immediately try to contact your landlord and tell him/her the severity of the problem. Also call your local Board of Health. You should notify your Board of Health whether you have or have not spoken to the landlord.

The Board of Health will be able to assist you quicker if you have the landlord's phone number and address handy. When you reach the Board of Health ask them whether you

should stay in your apartment at a particular time to wait for the inspector.

In an emergency situation, you should expect the situation resolved within two days. If it is not, begin calling the Board of Health and your Section 8 manager immediately. You should follow their advice on how to handle the situation from that point on. Either the Board of Health or the Section 8 manager should be able to direct you in the most appropriate method for handling the landlord's failure to make the necessary emergency repairs.

You should make notes and keep them of the names of all people with whom you talk and dates and times at the Board of Health, City Inspectors and Section 8 in case the situation escalates into a court case or other legal outcomes.

You should never withhold your rent in retaliation for the landlord's not making repairs unless you have been instructed to do so by Section 8 or legal services.

If you need sample letters for writing to the landlord or more details on handling emergency and non-emergency repairs, discuss it with your mobility counselor or call them at 973-642-8000.

Sheila Scudder

SELF-SUFFICIENCY: YOUR KEY TO EMPOWERMENT

Earlier this year Newark Housing Authority's Management and City Officials heralded the selection of two developers to build new neighborhoods on the 45-acres comprising Stella Wright Homes and the former Hayes Homes, Scudder Homes and Hill Manor sites. Six weeks later the first implosion of three of the seven Stella Wright Homes high-rises marked the end of an era of family high-rise public housing in Newark.



Now that the dust has settled and the debris is slowly being carted away to make room for the new neighborhoods, it is time for each former Stella Wright Homes resident to join the party. You must take ownership in the Stella Wright Homes Revitalization Project by participating in the planning process (see column by Assistant Executive Director on page 2). In addition, each former Stella Wright Homes resident is encouraged to take advantage of the resources available that will make you and your family self-sufficient.

The Community Supportive Services programs of the Stella Wright HOPE VI Revitalization Plan are designed to help families and individuals become financially independent and self-empowered. Participation in the program requires a personal commitment from you. The Housing Authority has engaged service providers to assist you in receiving such supportive services as:

- Education and Job Training,
- Job Placement Assistance,
- Drug Addiction Counseling and Assistance,
- Child Care Placement,
- Transportation Services,
- Life Skills Training Including Parenting, Housekeeping and Home Repair
- Credit repair, and
- Financial Planning

Call a representative of LST today to begin your Needs Assessment and Mobility Counseling and to get started on the road to self-sufficiency for you and your family (973-642-8000).

P HOTO ESSAY

Stella's Last Moments: Many of those lining the streets and wandering around on the open fields on the mornings of the implosions of Stella Wright had been witnesses to the rise and fall of those seven buildings. They had lived in them, around them or driven by them over the past 40 years and watched their transformation. The crowd flinched instinctively as the first blasts from the explosives erupted. Then silence descended while they watched intently as the dust appeared, slowly at first and then, with only a second of pause, the buildings simply fell to the ground.

"Amen," said one woman in the crowd and soon a few more "amens" were heard and finally applause and the nervous chatter resumed.

As the dust settled, it became clear that Stella Wright had been readied for a new chapter in its history.



STELLA RESIDENT FINDS "JUST THE PLACE" TO LIVE

Georgette Chaperone lived on Prince Street at Stella Wright Homes for 18 years, and she lived in her first Section 8 apartment in Newark for 1 1/2 years under very unsatisfactory conditions. So when Case Manager Sheila Scudder took her for a site visit of a Section 8 apartment in East Orange, Georgette says, "I knew it was the place for me as soon as I saw it. I didn't need to go anywhere else."

Her new neighborhood is quiet, "without any [drug] activity—not even in the park up the street," she stresses. This is very important to Georgette who is raising her 4-year-old granddaughter. Although she raised her two children at Stella, Georgette says, "I wanted something better for my granddaughter. I didn't want her to grow up in the same environment. She couldn't go outside without my fearing for her safety."

Georgette says she is trying to learn the new neighborhood by calling around to local facilities for information about day care for her granddaughter and other available services. There is a library and a church within walking distance, and she is pleasantly pleased by the friendliness of the neighbors. "Just the other day we were walking to the park and this lady stopped my granddaughter to say hello to her," she observes.

Now in her second Section 8 site, Georgette says the landlord's availability and willingness to cooperate is the key to living in a safe environment. Her current landlord, whom she's had to call for only one repair to date, made the repair immediately. "And when I call to ask him a question, he always responds."

While her apartment is the same size as the

one she lived in for 18 years at Stella, the neighborhood is dramatically different, Georgette says. "Nobody bothers you here and I feel that my granddaughter and I are safe. Even on New Year's Eve, when I expected a lot of noise, it was very quiet," she observes.

Georgette doesn't have a car, so shopping for groceries or going to the pharmacy is not as convenient as in the old neighborhood. The staffs at LST and the North Ward Center have assisted her with shopping a few times and have worked with her on learning more about her neighborhood. Even with these inconveniences, she's not interested in being back in the Central Ward. "I'm in a better place," she says, "so I'll just try to adjust."



NHA COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

NHA Board of Commissioners Member Lynell Robinson says he is proud to be a Housing Authority Commissioner, especially at this time when so much energy and activity is underway. The team of Commissioners in place now are perfect to carry forth the vision and mission of managing public housing that Newark Mayor Sharpe James and Housing Authority Executives have articulated. The vision has resulted in the implosion of all of Newark's high rise public housing buildings and NHA has begun replacing them with new, safe and handsomely appointed townhouses. "And the HOPE VI project continues this visionary progress," he says. "It is a tremendous program that will lead the Housing

Authority in decentralizing poverty in its neighborhoods through the use of a mixed-income housing," he adds.

Commissioner Robinson is currently a member of the Housing Development and Personnel committees and is a past vice-chairman of the Commission. One of the other milestones during his 13 years on the Board of Commissioners was the establishment of the trades apprenticeship program—a partnership between NHA and MOET. "I was happy to be a part of formulating the apprenticeship program," he says. "It enables residents to learn a skill and to be able to make a decent wage for their families."

A life-long product of Newark, Commissioner Robinson says the Housing



Authority is on the right track to being a superior institution. "We are trying to get more employees with qualifications that match the current and future needs of the agency," he says. "With increased talent and improved productivity, we will be well-placed to serve the community." According to Commissioner Robinson, the Housing Authority is destined to be a leader in the 'New Newark'.

ONE-STRIKE RULING APPLIES TO NHA PROPERTIES

On March 26, 2002, the Supreme Court of the United States upheld a drug-related policy used by many Public Housing Authorities, including Newark's, known as the "One Strike and You're Out Policy." Under this policy, as stated in the lease agreements, the Newark Housing Authority may terminate a tenant's lease for any of the following reasons:

- ◊ Drug related criminal activity engaged in or near the premises by any tenant, household member or guest and any such activity engaged in or near the premises by any other person under the tenant's control.
- ◊ When the Authority determines that a household member is illegally using a drug or determines that a pattern of illegal use of a drug interferes with the health, safety and peaceful surroundings of the premises for other tenants and families.
- ◊ Any criminal activity by a tenant, any member of the tenant's household, a

(Continued on page 7)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What Is Case Management And How Can It Serve My Family?

Case Management Services are provided by the North Ward Center, under contract with the Newark Housing Authority, to help you and your family become self-sufficient. Self-Sufficiency is defined as a family's ability to earn a living wage and to live in an environment where family members feel safe and are happy. Case management services designed to lead to self-sufficiency include: GED classes, legal services, TANF intervention, drug counseling, job search and assistance, youth development services and many more.

Who Is Eligible To Receive Case Management Services?

All former Stella Wright Homes residents who were lease compliant as of March 17, 1999, are eligible for Case Management Services.

How Do I Sign Up For Case Management Services?

Once you complete your needs assessment form and mobility counseling with LST, your case management service needs will be defined based upon your input. LST will then refer you to North Ward Center for case management services. However, if you have not completed needs assessment or mobility counseling to date and feel the need for case management services, you may call LST directly (973-642-8000) and meet with them to complete a needs assessment. You will then be referred to North Ward immediately for case management.

What If I Have A Concern Related To Newark Housing Authority?

LST has the ability to put you in touch with the most appropriate personnel within the Newark Housing Authority who will address the issues that concern you.

What Are The Eligibility Criteria For Receiving A Section 8 Voucher?

- 1) Applicant must be a family. NHA defines family as two or more persons (with or without children) regularly living together, related by blood, marriage, adoption, guardianship or operation of law. OR two or more persons who are not so related, but who are regularly living together and can verify shared income or

resources. OR single person who is elderly, disabled, displaced or the remaining member of a resident family.

- 2) Applicant's income must be within the appropriate income limits.
- 3) Applicant must furnish social security numbers for all family members six years and older.
- 4) Each member of applicant's household must certify to citizen/eligible immigrant status.
- 5) Applicant must be lease compliant.

All information that you provide NHA on family income, assets and family composition will be verified with local agencies and with your employer and bank. The information will be used to determine your eligibility and the amount of the rental assistance payment. Once NHA determines a family is eligible, the name is placed on a waiting list, unless NHA is able to assist the family immediately.

Can You Give Me Some Tips On How To Be A Successful Participant In The Section 8 Program?

You can ensure your successful participation in Section 8 by following a few simple guidelines.

- Supply all information NHA requests promptly and completely.
- Submit required consent forms for NHA to obtain information it needs to verify your documentation.
- Ensure that lease holders and persons on the lease are the only individuals occupying the unit.
- Read the lease and make sure you understand the terms before you sign it. Then make sure you abide by the terms of the lease.
- Notify NHA of any changes in the family—additions to the family must be approved by the NHA as occupants of the unit. Likewise, if a family member moves you must notify NHA.
- Notify NHA promptly of any owner eviction notice, of failure by owner to make necessary repairs, or other situations that prevent your enjoying a safe living environment.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE ANSWERED IN THIS SPACE, WRITE OR CALL CASE MANAGER SHEILA SCUDDER AT 57 SUSSEX AVENUE, NEWARK NJ 07103 (973-430-2342).



ONE-STRIKE RULING APPLIES TO NHA PROPERTIES

(Continued from page 5)

guest or another person under the tenant's control that threatens the health, safety or rights of the peaceful surroundings on the premises for other residents, property management staff who reside on the premises or any persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises.

- 0 A tenant that is fleeing to avoid

prosecution, custody or confinement after the conviction of a crime or attempt to commit a crime that is a felony under the laws of the place from which the individual flees or, in the case of the State of New Jersey, is considered a high misdemeanor. Also a tenant that is violating a condition of probation or parole imposed under Federal or State Law.

- 0 Any member of the household has ever been convicted of drug-related criminal activity for the manufacturing/production of methamphetamine on the premises of a federally assisted housing project.

If you need further details on this ruling or the terms as defined in your lease relating to this matter, please see your property management staff.

NEWARK ACTIVIST RECALLS STELLA STRIKE

Gus Henningburg, shown second from left, along with Attorney Harris David, far right, and consultants on October 26, 1978, on the occasion of the formal ceremony of the signing of the Stella Wright contract for the tenants to take over management of the property.



Gustav (Gus) Henningburg is modest when he recalls his role in the history making settlement that brought the Stella Wright Tenants strike to an end, thereby essentially ushering in the demise of federal funding of the building of high rise public housing projects across the nation. According to Gus, the first call came in the early morning hours from Toby Henry, president of the Stella Wright Tenants Association. He pleaded with Gus, then president and chief executive officer of the Greater Newark Urban Coalition, to join with the tenants in their struggle for safe, affordable housing. Henry told Gus about the fear that residents faced at the prospect of having their heat and electricity turned off.

The following day, in his systematic way of pursuing issues that has won him widespread respect and esteem throughout the state of New Jersey, Gus set out to determine exactly what was going on in the rent strike. Until that point he had been like most—an observer via the various media. "To a person friends, associates, and business leaders advised me 'you don't want to get involved in that.'" To those outside the fray of the rent strike, the Stella Wright residents had become synonymous with trouble—"folk who just don't want to pay their rent," he was told. But when Gus talked directly to the residents, the fear he saw, "especially among the people with little children," convinced him he wanted to be

involved. He agreed to mediate the end to the rent strike with the condition that the tenants had to pay their rent to a third party—"they had to get past this stigma of being a group of disgruntled folk who just didn't want to pay rent," Gus emphasized.

With that agreement in place, thus began the months that drug on into years of meetings with all of the affected parties—the residents, the Newark Housing Authority (NHA), the Newark Tenant Council (NTC), the Low Income Housing Coalition, and finally, under duress, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). "I was in between everybody," he recalled, "and the situation was tense because nobody was talking to each other." In the end, Gus drafted a memo outlining a multi-step approach to settling the rent strike. Federal Judge Frederick Lacey accepted the proposed settlement and the Stella Wright rent strike ended.

One of the major pieces of the agreement was the establishment of Stella Wright residents as the Management Agency for the project. "We brought in consultants to train them on tenant management," he said, "and many people working at the Housing Authority today received their training through that program."

"The long term impact of the Stella Wright rent strike is that it dramatized the failure of high-rise public housing projects to the

whole world," Gus says. "Everybody had said before that the high rises were failures, but this demonstrated the problems on a grand scale," he added. According to Gus, the rent strike represented the end of the building of new family high rises and "it physically ended [in Newark] when they blew up Stella Wright on April 27," he concluded.

Gus' relationship with NHA residents did not end with the settlement of the rent strike, however. Over the years, he said, a few will call or, more likely stop in with one of his favorite cakes and their latest problem. "Even after I left the Urban Coalition, I'd get called on all of the time. They never had money to pay and the cakes were their way of communicating that they appreciated my efforts," he said.

Currently Gus' role with the Housing Authority is as Special Master, an assignment that requires him to monitor the Authority's activities in relation to the court-ordered construction of 1777 new units. Again his role is one of mediator and negotiator between the various stakeholders to ensure that the Housing Authority's action are leading to the mandated construction outcome.

On June 5, 2002, hundreds of state leaders, businessmen, politicians and residents paid tribute to Gus Henningburg at a gala roast at NJPAC. He was honored for his critical role in settling the Stella Wright Homes tenant strike along with the numerous other contributions he has made to the City of Newark and the State of New Jersey in his role as social activist. Proceeds from the gala will benefit the establishment of the Rutgers-Newark Gus Henningburg Civic Fellow program.

**Housing Authority of the City
of Newark**

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Gladys Rodwell, *Administrative Secretary*
Nicky Parker, *Secretarial Assistant*

Yolanda Sutton is shown at right clad in her knee pads following a day's work as a carpenter's apprentice in the Women & Minorities Construction Training Program. Yolanda says the work is a challenge, but "she's set to go all the way".



Mr. Charles Cummings
NJ Information Center
P O Box 630
Newark NJ 07101

Summer Delight: **STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE**

INGREDIENTS FOR SPONGE CAKE

(Makes 10-12 servings):

SPONGE CAKE, CREAM, STRAWBERRIES—ALL COME TOGETHER TO MAKE THIS A FESTIVE CAKE. MAKE IT A DAY AHEAD TO LET IT COOL THOROUGHLY. COOL AND LUSCIOUS, EVERYONE WILL LOVE YOU WHEN YOU SERVE IT ON A HOT SUMMER DAY.

- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons unsalted butter
- 8 large eggs
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup bleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking power
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

In a small saucepan, melt the butter in the milk. Beat the eggs and 1 cup of sugar and add to the milk mixture. Sift the flour, baking power and salt into a medium-size mixing bowl. Add the flour mixture, half at a time, into the egg mixture and blend thoroughly until smooth. Add the vanilla and mix gently. Grease a 17 x 12 inch baking pan with 2 tablespoons butter. Sprinkle the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar. Pour the cake batter into the pan, spreading it evenly. Bake until the cake springs back when touched, about 15 minutes. Cool for about 2 minutes, then



gently flip out onto a large wire rack or wax paper. Let cool completely. To assemble, spread strawberries over the bottom of a glass dish (about 10 x 13). Place cake carefully on top and gently press down to remove air pockets. Put the remaining half of the strawberries on the top of the cake. Top with whipped cream before serving, if desired. You may also use a mixture of fresh blackberries, blueberries or raspberries in place of the strawberries.



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